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ABSTRACT

A discussion of dictionaries and their use for second language (L2) learning suggests that lack of computerized modern language corpora can adversely affect bilingual dictionaries, commonly used by L2 learners, and shows how use of such corpora has benefitted two contemporary monolingual L2 learner dictionaries (1995 editions of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English and Collins Cobuild English Dictionary). The 1994 edition of the Kenkyusha New College English-Japanese Dictionary and the 1995 edition of the Kenkyusha New College Japanese-English Dictionary are examined for some recent improvements and remaining linguistic deficiencies, particularly usage errors and lack of updated word frequency, collocation, grammatical, and formality information. Examination of the two monolingual dictionaries in question shows how use of natural frequency information from modern, computerized corpora influenced the selection of lexical items, definitions, examples, grammatical patterns, and pragmatics in the dictionary entries. The importance of training in dictionary use is also highlighted. Contains 18 references. (MSE)

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Evaluating Bilingual and Monolingual Dictionaries for L2 Learners

Alan Hunt

The one book which second language (L2) learners can be assumed to own is a dictionary. Whether bilingual or monolingual, a dictionary is considered to be an essential source of trustworthy information; indeed, it is the presumed accuracy of any dictionary which is the basis of its authority. However, bilingual dictionaries seem to be unduly trusted by students, particularly by those who have little or no experience using contemporary monolingual dictionaries that are designed specifically for L2 learners.

This essay will examine how a lack of computerized corpora can affect bilingual dictionaries and how the use of these corpora has benefited two contemporary monolingual L2 learner dictionaries, specifically the 1995 editions of the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (*LDOCE*) and *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary* (*CCED*). As many students continue to rely heavily on bilingual dictionaries, this essay will first consider some of the improvements and remaining linguistic weaknesses of two of Kenkyusha's bilingual dictionaries. Since they were recently published and show evidence of being partially updated, the sixth edition (1994) of the *Kenkyusha New College English-Japanese Dictionary* (*KNCEJD*) and the fourth edition (1995) of the *Kenkyusha New College Japanese-English Dictionary* (*KNCJED*) were chosen for this purpose. In the cases of the *LDOCE* and the *CCED*, this essay will discuss how the use of natural data and frequency information from modern corpora influence the selection of lexical items, definitions, examples, grammatical patterns, and pragmatics in their dictionary entries.

Bilingual Dictionaries

As McCarthy (1990) cautions, a bilingual dictionary is a necessary but limited tool: it is

essential for the learner to know "what it *can* do and crucially, what it *cannot* do" (p. 136, McCarthy's italics). As this comment implies, learners are often unaware of what information bilingual dictionaries do not provide. Learners who know the limits of their dictionaries will carefully consult the original English context, native speakers, or monolingual dictionaries for further information. Those students who have received training in the critical use of their bilingual dictionaries will use them as just one step in their approach to learning new words. However, those who lack such training cannot be expected to know what their dictionaries can and cannot do.

Bilingual Dictionaries and Usage Errors

One serious consequence of not using modern computerized corpora is that bilingual dictionaries are more likely to include usage errors in their entries. As Takahiko Soejima (1989) claimed in *Kekkan Eiwa Jiten no Kenkyu* (*A Study on Defective Dictionaries*), two of Kenkyusha's dictionaries included outdated terms or had problematic usage in about 20% of the example sentences, while 5% of the sentences definitely included errors (p. 12). Actually, most of these errors cited in Soejima's study were chosen from Kenkyusha's *Lighthouse Dictionary*, which was being promoted at the time as a superior dictionary (Okada, 1989, pp. 35-37). Although Kenkyusha sued Soejima and his publisher and won a 4 million yen judgment, the Tokyo District Court agreed that Soejima's criticisms were valid in 18 out of 85 cases. Several of these errors were recently cited in *The Daily Yomiuri*, illustrating some of the usage problems in the Kenkyusha dictionaries: "He won't see being used;" "The stars are glistening in the sky;" and "We went around to drop into the drug-store on our way home" (Aihara, 1996, p. 14). According to the article, Soejima recommended changing these to: "He won't allow himself to be used;" "His face glistened with sweat;" and "We went out of our way to drop by the drugstore on our way home" (Aihara, 1996, p. 14). Although Kenkyusha denied that Soejima's criticisms led to changes in their dictionaries, the publisher claims to have revised many of the errors as a part of its regular reviewing process. Indeed, none of Soejima's examples of errors cited in the *Daily Yomiuri* appear in the *KNCEJD*. As for the source of such errors, Katsuaki Horiuchi, a linguistics professor at Meiji University, stated that some publishers have been known to ignore the revisions suggested by native speakers in order to avoid changes that might embarrass senior Japanese scholars in the publishing companies (Aihara, 1996). While Soejima (1989) does mention this as a likely cause for such errors, he also blames native speakers who allow their names to be used when revisions are not carried out (p. 33-

34). As the editorial manager of Kenkyusha's dictionary department, Josuke Okada, observed, it is impossible to eliminate all errors from a dictionary, so "the point is to what extent the error is permited" (Aihara, 1996, p. 14). If this comment is taken seriously and the data gathered in the future from large computerized corpora are not ignored, then such out-dated usage errors could be quickly eliminated, resulting in more reliable and accurate bilingual dictionaries.

Corpora and Frequency Information

Another disadvantage caused by not using modern corpora is that bilingual dictionaries lack updated frequency information. The *KNCEJD* does use frequency symbols to indicate what Kenkyusha has chosen to call its basic vocabulary ("kihongo") for secondary school and higher education. Three asterisks next to an English word indicate that it belongs to the first 1000 junior high school words (chugaku gakushu teido no kihongo yaku 1000 go); two asterisks mark the next 1000 words which are expected to be learned in high school (kokogaku gakushu teido no kihongo yaku 1000 go); one asterisk indicates that the words belong to the next 2,000 university level words (daigaku gakushu teido no kihongo yaku 2000 go); and a single diamond marks the next 3,000 words that follow the university level. These levels apparently have been determined by Kenkyusha, since no reference is made to any source in their dictionaries. Consequently, based on the dictionary's introduction and explanatory notes, it is impossible to know just how reliable this frequency information is. To speculate, if this frequency information were based on West's (1953) *General Service List*, then it is this author's estimate that about 20% of the terms would need replacing. Unlike the *KNCEJD*, the *KNCJED* gives no indication of the actual frequency of the Japanese words and phrases. If updated written and spoken corpora were developed and frequency analysis was applied to this data, then learners could benefit from having up-to-date frequency information.

A further consequence related to not using updated corpus information is that the ordering of the definitions by frequency has not been fully implemented in the *KNCEJD*. Partial updating is evident in the entry for the word "gay," which many older bilingual dictionaries defined as "youki na" (happy or cheerful) as the first definition in the entry. Based on this author's classroom observations, some dictionaries do not even include the meaning "doseiai" (homosexual) at all, whereas others put this translation in the second or third definition of the entry. To Kenkyusha's credit, the *KNCEJD* has placed the most frequently occurring meaning ("doseiai") at the beginning of the entry (p. 749). Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the entry on "discrimination," which lists "kubetsu" as the first definition and "sabetsu" for

the second definition (p. 509). When one compares this bilingual dictionary entry to recent monolingual EFL/ESL learners dictionaries, the order of the definitions is reversed. For reasons of frequency, "discrimination against someone" is listed first in both the *CCED* (p. 469) and in the *LDOCE* (p. 508). It is extremely important for L2 learners to be given some idea about how common the different definitions in an entry are relative to each other, as this can help learners accurately choose the meanings that fit their purposes.

Frequency, Collocational and Grammatical Information

Another limitation of most bilingual dictionaries is that, although they include some collocational and grammatical information, they offer less information than the *LDOCE* or the *CCED*. In the *KNCEJD*'s entry for "play," one does find the sentences "play an important part *in* a musical" and "water plays an important part *in* the functioning of the body" (p. 1356). Thus, one does learn that "play" collocates with inanimate subjects like "water" as well as occuring in the common pattern, "to play a part in;" furthermore, the grammatical pattern is emphasized by italicizing "in." Nevertheless, this entry does not mention "role" as a common collocation (it is only included in the entry for "role," p. 1539), and, although this entry is comparable to the *LDOCE*, it does not provide the range of possible topics and subjects that the *CCED* does. As the later discussion of "play" for the *LDOCE* and the *CCED* in this essay points out, concordance data clearly reveals what collocations and grammatical patterns commonly appear with the word "play."

Frequency and Formality

Another problem that updated corpora might help to clarify is the similarities and the differences between formality levels of Japanese and English words. Referring to the translation of "sara ni" as "moreover" or "furthermore," Summers (1995) comments that, since "moreover" or "furthermore" are more formal than "sara ni," "the resulting English translation would sound stiff and even rather pompous" (p. 25). Unfortunately, it is not clear whether the usage of "sara ni" referred to here is spoken or written, but one would expect "moreover" to be more acceptable as a translation from written Japanese to written English. In the *KNCJED*, "sara ni" is defined as "still more; further; ((fml)) furthermore; ((fml)) moreover" (p. 703). This translation is then illustrated by the sentences, "Sara ni warui koto ni wa ame ga furidashita. To make matters worse, rain began to fall" (p. 703). The *KNCJED* does indicate that "furthermore" and "moreover,"are formal, implying that they would be

more likely to be used in writing than in speaking. A weakness of this entry is that the sentence example in the entry translates "sara ni warui koto" as "to make matters worse," showing that "sara ni" can add emphasis to the adjective "warui;" however, this does not illustrate the usages presented in the definitions. The entry also implies that the synonyms "still more; further" are less formal, but it is not clear if the example sentence is a formal or informal usage. Without more example sentences, the reader cannot be certain in which cases "sara ni" and "moreover" and the other translations are nearly equivalent in their formality. Further information about the relative frequency of informal and formal usages of "sara ni" would be helpful, and corpus data could provide this information.

While the few examples cited here cannot adequately portray all the pros and cons of these bilingual dictionaries, they do suggest some of the difficulties involved in using them. Although many words (especially concrete nouns) can be translated to provide reasonably accurate equivalents, bilingual dictionaries must be used with care. Learners need to know that a bilingual dictionary may not order meanings according to their frequency of use, and usually cannot provide as much English context as a monolingual dictionary; consequently, bilingual dictionaries will not give the user as full of an understanding about the range of collocations, grammatical patterns, and situations in which the word can be used. While these problems exist in the bilingual dictionaries cited in this essay, these problems are further exacerbated by the fact that students often continue to use older, less up-to-date editions from their high school classes. In addition, some students also rely primarily on their pocket-sized bilingual dictionaries, which rarely provide any English language context and which frequently include rarely used terms. These pocket dictionaries essentially attempt to cover too much territory by trying to meet the needs of scholars as well as the general learner (Tomzszczyk, 1981). As this student behavior suggests, even if some publishers do adopt the practice of collecting and using corpus-based data in their dictionaries, students may continue to use older editions unless instructed to purchase or use more recent ones.

Bilingual Dictionaries and the Nature of Language

Perhaps the most serious disadvantage of bilingual dictionaries is that they can reinforce in many learners a fairly naive view of language itself. That is, these dictionaries may be used in a way that encourages learners to "work on an individual word basis, in the worst sense, expecting a one-to-one correlation between the words of their own language and English" (Summers, 1988, p. 112). It seems that many learners believe that a single English word

necessarily has a corresponding Japanese synonym. Another problem is that learners come to overrely upon their bilingual dictionaries, probably because of their familiarity with them as well as their reluctance to make the extra effort required for using a monolingual dictionary. Such a reaction is to be expected and underscores the need for training in the use of a monolingual dictionary. Certainly, using a monolingual dictionary requires more effort from the user; however this could be advantageous for language learning, since increased processing of a word may result in improved retention (Summers, 1995). Although bilingual dictionaries can be helpful when thoughtfully used, problems arise when the learners use them in ways that reinforce a view of language learning as word-for-word translation.

Monolingual Dictionaries

As emphasized throughout the above discussion, the *LDOCE* and the *CCED* differ significantly from bilingual dictionaries because they rely upon large corpora, enormous collections of written and spoken language stored in and analyzed using computers. These corpora are carefully designed to include a wide coverage of topics and sources. The *LDOCE* draws upon the British National Corpus (100 million words), its own Longman Corpus Network (30 million words of spoken English), and the Longman Learner's Corpus (5 million words). The *CCED* is based on The Bank of English (200 million words selected from an archive of 500 million) which also includes a spoken corpus (15 million words). Using a wide range of sources, these corpora provide natural data (the spoken corpora are tape-recorded, natural conversations) upon which to base much of the information in the dictionary entries — the treatment of the definitions, examples, phrases/idioms, collocations, frequency, and usage and style. These corpora are what enable monolingual dictionaries like the *LDOCE* and the *CCED* to surpass other monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. This data allows for the creation of better monolingual English dictionaries in which, "the words, meanings, and examples accurately reflect English as used and recognized as natural and correct by native speakers of English" (Summers, 1995, p. 25).

Frequency Information

Once large quantities of natural data have been collected, frequency analysis is one of the most fundamentally important types of information that can be extracted, because it affects most aspects of a dictionary entry — what words to include, the order of definitions within an

entry, collocations, grammatical patterns, and pragmatics. Initially, frequency is a critical factor because it is used to decide which words to include in the dictionaries. As the *CCED* states, "COBUILD specializes in presenting the words and phrases that are frequent in everyday use. . . COBUILD is not a historical record of the language, and it is not a list of all the peculiar words that help you finish a crossword" (p. ix). Rather the purpose of these general learners' dictionaries is to include language that is commonly used by native English speakers. Frequency is also used to classify which words are part of a core vocabulary, the most frequently occurring words in English, and both dictionaries use symbols to present this information. The *LDOCE* indicates frequency by placing the symbols S1, S2, S3, W1, W2, and W3 in the margins. A word labeled as S1 W2 is within the top 1000 spoken words (S1) and is within the second most common 1000 written words (W2). The *CCED* uses a 5 diamond system to mark frequency information. The most commonly used words in the English language cover about 75% of the running words on a page; these are indicated by five diamonds (the top 700 most common words) or four diamonds (the next 1200 most common words). If one adds to these words the three diamond words (the next 1500) and the two diamond words (the next 3200), then these 6,600 words are called the "essential core vocabulary" of the English language (p. ix). Unlike the *LDOCE*, the *CCED* does not separately indicate spoken and written frequency in its symbols, but it does state within the entry whether a word is primarily spoken or written. Nevertheless, the *LDOCE*'s information on spoken frequency is more easily accessible and precise than the combined spoken and written frequency information used in the *CCED*. Finally, frequency information is a key factor used by both dictionaries to restrict the vocabulary words used in their definitions. This practice has been shown to be preferred by learners (MacFarquhar and Richards, 1983; Nation, 1990).

In addition to being a key factor in selecting which words to put into the dictionary, frequency also determines the order of meanings within a given entry. That is, as was mentioned previously using the examples "gay" and "discrimination," the most frequently used meanings of words are placed first in the entries. The *LDOCE* is very explicit about using this principle for homographs, as well as for phrases, syntactical constructions, and collocations within an entry.

Frequency, Collocational and Grammatical Information

In addition to determining the order of meanings within entries, frequency information is a key factor in choosing what collocations and grammatical patterns should be included for

specific words. The collocations and grammatical patterns that most frequently appear in the concordance data will often be used in the definitions, examples and grammatical patterns chosen for an entry. A few lines of concordance information from the *CCED* illustrates how a concordance calls attention to the local context for the verb "play:"

. . . It would appear that hormones *play a crucial role* in precipitating. . .
. . . area, and politics has to *play a part* in the Deputy Speaker's. . .
. . . it wasn't him. He obviously *played a role*, but it was those young. . .
(*CCED*, p. xii, my italics)

The word "play" is displayed in the center of each line of data and the surrounding words present collocational and grammatical information. After examining large amounts of this concordance data, lexicographers can observe that "play" is often followed by the nouns "role" or "part," and that the adjectives "crucial," "important," and "active" frequently appear prior to these nouns. Thus, "play" repeatedly occurs in patterns like, "... play an important role," and "... play an active part" (p. xii).

This collocational and grammatical information is then incorporated into the definitions, examples and explicit grammatical notes. The *LDOCE* sometimes uses a traditional definitional style, choosing either phrases or sentences to define a term. For example, the *LDOCE* defines "**play a part/role in sth**" as "to have an effect or an influence on something: *The press plays an important role in the life of a democracy*" (p. 1370). This entry uses bold highlighting as well as the definition and examples to stress that this is a fixed pattern. The *CCED* definition uses full sentences and is designed to incorporate common collocations and grammatical patterns (commonly co-occurring subjects/objects, prepositions, transitive/intransitive verb patterns etc.): "If something or someone plays a part or plays a role in a situation, they are involved in it and have an effect on it. *They played a part in the life of their community... The UN would plays a major role in monitoring a ceasefire. ... the role played by diet in disease* (p. 1259). The *CCED* definition informs the user that the subject can be animate or inanimate, and the added examples give a fuller sense of what collocations and situations the phrase can be used in. While the bold lettering does not emphasize the prepositional phrase that often follows "play a role" as explicity as does the *LDOCE* entry, the *CCED* notes this information in the extra column using the symbols "usu PHR *in* n," which means the phrase is followed by "in + a noun." Also, both dictionaries start with natural examples (sometimes

simplified) from their respective corpora data, and these are chosen to explicitly illustrate the grammatical notations. In the *LDOCE* the use of grammatical symbols is far less complex than in the *CCED* (the former has only three pages of explanatory notes in the introduction). Indeed, from a learner's point of view, the *CCED* may seem overwhelming, because the explanatory notes for its grammatical symbols and notations cover nearly ten pages.

Usage and Pragmatics

The vast amount of data available in these corpora not only reveal the commonly occurring linguistic context of lexical items, but also assist in identifying common pragmatic usages. As Carter (1987) observes, dictionaries have traditionally tended to represent the "stable," denotative meanings of words, while lacking information about connotative meanings and pragmatic functions, which are more dependent upon context. According to Carter, contextually based entries need to inform the learner about "who uses the word to whom, when, where, for what purpose and in connection with what topic" (p. 210). The *LDOCE* and the *CCED* do attempt to include this type of pragmatic information. In addition to indicating clearly when usage is either primarily British or American, both dictionaries label register restrictions — whether a word is formal, informal, slang, taboo, offensive, literary, technical, old-fashioned, written or spoken. The *LDOCE* further includes the category "poetic" usage, and the *CCED* labels words which are "legal," "medical," or from the field of "journalism."

While such explicit labeling of the fields in which words are commonly used is a widespread practice, the more innovative aspect of these dictionaries is that they incorporate pragmatic information into their definitions. In the *LDOCE*, the request "I hate to ask," is presented as: "**I hate to ask/interrupt/disturb etc** *spoken* used to say that you are sorry that you have to ask etc: *I hate to ask, but would you be able to give me a lift home tonight?*" (p. 838). In the *CCED* this same phrase appears as: "You can use hate in expressions such as I hate to trouble you or I hate to bother you when you are apologizing to someone for interrupting them or asking them to do something. *I hate to rush you but I have another appointment later on*" (p. 772). The *CCED* places the label "pragmatics" next to the definition; thus, the *CCED* tends to be more explicit than the *LDOCE* in calling the learner's attention to the pragmatics. Moreover, the *CCED*'s introductory explanation uses examples to illustrate various types of pragmatics that reveal speaker's intentions, goals, attitudes, and relationships as well as such situational functions as apologizing, requesting, expressing surprise, approval and disapproval, certainty and uncertainty.

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Areas for Improvement

While the large corpora and the use of frequency information have undoubtedly improved monolingual dictionaries like the *LDOCE* and the *CCED*, these dictionaries are still evolving. One issue that can pose problems is the degree to which semi-fixed phrases and other productive information should be incorporated into general learners' monolingual dictionaries. Arguing that it is of little value to try to distinguish between idioms and non-idioms or collocations, Carter (1987) states that it is more useful to classify idioms and collocations as fixed expressions and to show the degree to which they are variable. In terms of this classification, recent dictionaries have been more effective in presenting information about fixed rather than semi-fixed phrases (Carter, 1987; Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992). Naturally, in the case of more flexible phrases, it is not surprising that learners still have problems of not only "decoding opaque multi-word units but of knowing the degree of flexibility (or otherwise) of individual units" (McCarthy, 1990, p. 135). Ideally, monolingual dictionaries would give a clear indication of just how flexible these phrases are, and the *LDOCE* and the *CCED* may well be in the process of accomplishing this task. For example, Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) point out the existence of the widely varying senses of different collocations surrounding "strong personality," "strong odor," and "strong tea." The current editions of the *LDOCE* and the *CCED* both provide fairly adequate information about these collocations. As "strong" has many entries, the *LDOCE* uses it's "signpost" system so that learners can more easily search for a specific sense. In this system for longer entries, each sense under the headword begins with a bold key word in capital letters, which is chosen from the dictionary's restricted, defining vocabulary. Thus, under "strong," the following definitions begin like: "1 >PHYSICAL STRENGTH< ...;" "2 >THINGS< ...;" "3 >ABLE TO DEAL WITH DIFFICULTY< ...;" "4 >POWER< ..." etc. (p. 1808-9). In addition to providing a deductive framework for learners to locate specific definitions, these signposts provide a sense of collocational range that are supported by each entry's examples. Although *LDOCE*'s entry includes the senses of "strong odor" and "strong drinks," it does not clearly define "strong personality." In the *CCED* all three senses of "strong" are explicitly defined (p. 1656-7).

Although both dictionaries included most of the collocations with "strong," they may not do so well with other collocations. Carter (1987) examines how *The Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English* (*ODCIE*) provides learners with information about the total range of collocations possible, using symbols to note what objects or subjects can be used and what restrictions apply. For example, prices, temperatures, and applications can be subjects for

"shoot up." The *ODCIE* uses semi-colons to indicate these separate usages: "Shoot up ... rise, increase sharply ... S: price, cost, rent; temperature, pressure; applications, attendance" (Carter, 1987, p. 134). Neither the *LDOCE* nor the *CCED* offer such a variety of subjects in their examples: the *LDOCE* includes prices, supermarkets, and a person's height as common subjects (p. 1668), while the *CCED* limits its subjects to sales and market value (p. 1535). Possibly the frequency analysis of the collocations suggested that it would be better to restrict the range of collocations presented; on the other hand, it may have been done to save space. In either case, one can argue that more collocational information for these entries should be provided.

Finally, for productive purposes, general learner dictionaries may not provide enough information on semi-fixed expressions to prevent learner errors. Although studies have found that dictionaries are usually used to check the meanings of words and secondarily to check spelling and pronunciation (Bejoint, 1981; Summers, 1988), learners may be able to gain some productive knowledge from these recent L2 learners' dictionaries. McCarthy (1990) raises the question of whether the past tense can be used with the idiom 'to bark up the wrong tree,' since it is usually used in the progressive tense. While some dictionaries include the information that this idiom is usually used in the progressive tense, others do not. In this case the *LDOCE* provides an example sentence in the progressive, but does not explicitly note the tense (p. 136). On the other hand, the *CCED* explicity labels this fixed phrase as "usu cont," (usually continuous) (p. 1785). Moreover, when students produce errors like "John rescued my life," McCarthy (1990) found that dictionary entries often do not state clearly that it is preferable to say or write "John saved my life." Neither the *LDOCE* nor the *CCED* provide information that would prevent learners from making this error. However, it may be unreasonable to expect general learners' dictionaries to comprehensively cover many learners' errors, since such information may be better placed in special learners' dictionaries, which focus on common errors for a specific language group, such as with Japanese learners or Arab learners etc. This would be especially true when the error is to due to translation. On the other hand, if certain learners' errors such as "rescued my life" are common across cultures, then this type of information could certainly enhance the usefulness of these dictionaries for productive purposes.

Training in Dictionary Use

The process of revising bilingual and monolingual dictionaries is an unending task, which should increase the trustworthiness of these reference sources. However, no matter how im-

proved any dictionary becomes, a lack of training will limit their usefulness. Unfortunately, very little time is devoted to training students on how to use their dictionaries (Graves, 1987; Summers, 1988); consequently, instructors cannot automatically expect students to know how to get the most from either their bilingual or monolingual dictionaries. Initially, training needs to focus on being able to identify the elements of an entry and understanding the sometimes difficult systems of symbols used to for pronunciation, grammar, and pragmatics. After this basic training learners can benefit from carefully examining the sentence examples of entries (especially higher frequency words) as a way to build up their knowledge about the collocations and usages connected to these words. Additional practice is also required for students to use dictionaries for productive purposes such as writing and speaking. Finally, instructors need to emphasize that, in using a dictionary, learners must give priority to the original context in which language occurs, as the meaning of individual words is often not independent of the words that surround them. While it is impossible for dictionaries to completely meet learners' needs for the effective decoding let alone the correct encoding of language (McCarthy, 1990), training in what dictionaries have to offer can ultimately help students make their own decisions about when to use their dictionary and when to rely on context or seek the advice of their teachers and/or native speakers.

Conclusion

Despite signs of improvement, the *KNCEJD* and the *KNCJED* will not become truly up-to-date without access to recently created computerized corpora and the frequency information that these collections of word data can provide for spoken and written English. Also, the same type of data collection and analysis that has been used for monolingual English dictionaries like the *LDOCE* and the *CCED* should be developed for the Japanese language and applied to bilingual dictionary entries. Just as revising is an unending process for bilingual dictionaries, it is essential for monolingual dictionaries as well. Although the recent editions of the *LDOCE* and the *CCED* have been revised and improved due to the use of large corpora and frequency analysis, lexicographers will continue to grapple with the extent to which semi-fixed phrases, collocations, pragmatics, and information for accurate production should be included in these dictionaries. Finally, no matter how excellent a dictionary becomes in the quality of its information and trustworthiness, learners cannot fully benefit from them without proper training.

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